

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

INFOTAB, formerly known as ICOSI (International Committee on Smoking Issues), was formally established on December 1, 1978 as a non-profit Swiss association. In 1979, the Association opened an office in Brussels, to serve as the Secretariat, and published its charter in the official Belgian journal.

The objectives of the Association, as stated in its charter, are to establish a forum for exchange of views and information on international tobacco issues (to include tobacco and health) and to broaden the knowledge of its members, of consumers and of appropriate authorities on these issues. In large part, accomplishment of these objectives is sought by providing information to various national and other tobacco trade associations.

INFOTAB has three categories of membership: Founding Members, Associate Members and Allied Members.

The Founding Members of INFOTAB are British-American Tobacco Company Ltd., Imperial Tobacco Ltd., Philip Morris Incorporated, H.F. & Ph.F. Reemtsma, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and Rothmans International Ltd.

Expansion of membership in the Associate and Allied categories is now underway. Application for Associate membership is open to private-enterprise manufacturers of tobacco products. Application for Allied membership will be open progressively to:

- 1) national tobacco manufacturers' associations;
- 2) state-owned tobacco manufacturers; and
- 3) private-enterprise manufacturers of tobacco products other than cigarettes, and suppliers to the tobacco manufacturing sector.

INFOTAB's work program is carried out jointly by the Secretariat and project teams. The program addresses specific subjects in the broad range of tobacco issues.

Information emanating from project work and from a variety of other sources is distributed by the Secretariat to members and to national tobacco manufacturers' associations (NMAs) in 28 countries. Members and NMAs, in turn, contribute the major portion of information that is provided by the Secretariat.

At least once a year, INFOTAB holds an international workshop for NMAs to encourage exchanges of information on developments in tobacco issues, national industry programs and INFOTAB's activities.

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INFOTAB is governed by a Board of Directors comprising representatives of Founding Members. An Advisory Group established by the Board is responsible for projects and other responsibilities which the Board designates as required.

Personnel in the Secretariat include a Secretary General, Director of Information Services and staff, a Regional Coordinator and Manager of Administration.

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